Case 2:22-cv-01473-KSM_ Document 1 Filed 04/15/22 Page 1 of 11 CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

purpose of initiating the civil do	ocket sheet. (SEE INSTRUC	TIONS ON NEXT PAGE O	OF THIS FO	RM.)	, 1		
I. (a) PLAINTIFFS				DEFENDANTS			
Gregg Hennix and Tawanda Hennix				Belfor USA Group, Inc., d/b/a "Belfor USA"			
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Montgomery Co., PA				County of Residence of First Listed Defendant (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY) NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.			
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)				Attorneys (If Known)			
Andrew L. Miller & Associates - 610.617.1776 15 St. Asaph's Road, Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004				Greenberg Traurig 1717 Arch Street, S			PA 19103
II. BASIS OF JURISDI	CTION (Place an "X" in O	ne Box Only)			RINCIPA	L PARTIES	(Place an "X" in One Box for Plainti
☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff	☐ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)			(For Diversity Cases Only) PT en of This State	rf def 1 □ 1	Incorporated or Pri of Business In T	
☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant	■ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)		Citize	en of Another State	2 🗖 2	Incorporated and F of Business In A	
			Citizen or Subject of a				
IV. NATURE OF SUIT			FC	DEFITIIDE/DENIALTV			of Suit Code Descriptions.
CONTRACT ☐ 110 Insurance ☐ 120 Marine ☐ 130 Miller Act ☐ 140 Negotiable Instrument ☐ 150 Recovery of Overpayment	PERSONAL INJURY □ 310 Airplane □ 315 Airplane Product Liability □ 320 Assault, Libel &	PERSONAL INJUR 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability 367 Health Care/ Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability 368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability PERSONAL PROPEI 370 Other Fraud 371 Truth in Lending 380 Other Personal Property Damage Product Liability PRISONER PETITIO Habeas Corpus: 463 Alien Detainee 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence 530 General 535 Death Penalty Other: 540 Mandamus & Oth 550 Civil Rights 555 Prison Condition 560 Civil Detainee - Conditions of Confinement	1	DRFEITURE/PENALTY 5 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 0 Other LABOR 0 Fair Labor Standards Act 0 Labor/Management Relations 0 Railway Labor Act 1 Family and Medical Leave Act 0 Other Labor Litigation 1 Employee Retirement Income Security Act IMMIGRATION 2 Naturalization Application 5 Other Immigration Actions	422 Appe 423 With 28 U:	SC 157 TTY RIGHTS rights t t - Abbreviated Drug Application mark SECURITY (1395ff) L Lung (923) C/DIWW (405(g)) Title XVI 405(g)) L TAX SUITS (U.S. Plaintiff efendant)	OTHER STATUTES □ 375 False Claims Act □ 376 Qui Tam (31 USC
V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" in 1 Original Proceeding X2 Real Sta	moved from 3 te Court Cite the U.S. Civil Sta 28 U.S.C. §1332 Brief description of ca	Appellate Court tute under which you a use:	re filing (I	pened Anothe (specify) Oo not cite jurisdictional stat	r District utes unless div		
Plaintiff seeks damages for alleged personal injuries allegedly caused by Belfor. VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT: COMPLAINT: Plaintiff seeks damages for alleged personal injuries allegedly caused by Belfor. CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION DEMAND \$ CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint: UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P. JURY DEMAND: ▼ Yes □ No						=	
VIII. RELATED CASE IF ANY	E(S) (See instructions):	JUDGE			DOCKE	T NUMBER	
DATE 04/15/2022		SIGNATURE OF AT	TORNEY C	OF RECORD	lacem	lar las	
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY RECEIPT # AM	MOUNT_	APPLYING IFP		JUDGE		MAG. JUD	OGE

JS 44 Reverse (Rev. 06/17)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS COMPLETING CIVIL COVER SHEET FORM JS 44

Authority For Civil Cover Sheet

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filings and service of pleading or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. Consequently, a civil cover sheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complaint filed. The attorney filing a case should complete the form as follows:

- Plaintiffs-Defendants. Enter names (last, first, middle initial) of plaintiff and defendant. If the plaintiff or defendant is a government agency, use only the full name or standard abbreviations. If the plaintiff or defendant is an official within a government agency, identify first the agency and then the official, giving both name and title.
- County of Residence. For each civil case filed, except U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county where the first listed plaintiff resides at the time of filing. In U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county in which the first listed defendant resides at the time of filing. (NOTE: In land condemnation cases, the county of residence of the "defendant" is the location of the tract of land involved.)
- Attorneys. Enter the firm name, address, telephone number, and attorney of record. If there are several attorneys, list them on an attachment, noting in this section "(see attachment)".
- II. Jurisdiction. The basis of jurisdiction is set forth under Rule 8(a), F.R.Cv.P., which requires that jurisdictions be shown in pleadings. Place an "X" in one of the boxes. If there is more than one basis of jurisdiction, precedence is given in the order shown below.
 - United States plaintiff. (1) Jurisdiction based on 28 U.S.C. 1345 and 1348. Suits by agencies and officers of the United States are included here. United States defendant. (2) When the plaintiff is suing the United States, its officers or agencies, place an "X" in this box.
 - Federal question. (3) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1331, where jurisdiction arises under the Constitution of the United States, an amendment to the Constitution, an act of Congress or a treaty of the United States. In cases where the U.S. is a party, the U.S. plaintiff or defendant code takes precedence, and box 1 or 2 should be marked.
 - Diversity of citizenship. (4) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1332, where parties are citizens of different states. When Box 4 is checked, the citizenship of the different parties must be checked. (See Section III below; NOTE: federal question actions take precedence over diversity cases.)
- III. Residence (citizenship) of Principal Parties. This section of the JS 44 is to be completed if diversity of citizenship was indicated above. Mark this section for each principal party.
- Nature of Suit. Place an "X" in the appropriate box. If there are multiple nature of suit codes associated with the case, pick the nature of suit code IV. that is most applicable. Click here for: Nature of Suit Code Descriptions.
- **Origin.** Place an "X" in one of the seven boxes. V.
 - Original Proceedings. (1) Cases which originate in the United States district courts.
 - Removed from State Court. (2) Proceedings initiated in state courts may be removed to the district courts under Title 28 U.S.C., Section 1441. When the petition for removal is granted, check this box.
 - Remanded from Appellate Court. (3) Check this box for cases remanded to the district court for further action. Use the date of remand as the filing
 - Reinstated or Reopened. (4) Check this box for cases reinstated or reopened in the district court. Use the reopening date as the filing date. Transferred from Another District. (5) For cases transferred under Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1404(a). Do not use this for within district transfers or multidistrict litigation transfers.
 - Multidistrict Litigation Transfer. (6) Check this box when a multidistrict case is transferred into the district under authority of Title 28 U.S.C.
 - Multidistrict Litigation Direct File. (8) Check this box when a multidistrict case is filed in the same district as the Master MDL docket. PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NOT AN ORIGIN CODE 7. Origin Code 7 was used for historical records and is no longer relevant due to changes in statue.
- VI. Cause of Action. Report the civil statute directly related to the cause of action and give a brief description of the cause. Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity. Example: U.S. Civil Statute: 47 USC 553 Brief Description: Unauthorized reception of cable service
- Requested in Complaint. Class Action. Place an "X" in this box if you are filing a class action under Rule 23, F.R.Cv.P. Demand. In this space enter the actual dollar amount being demanded or indicate other demand, such as a preliminary injunction. Jury Demand. Check the appropriate box to indicate whether or not a jury is being demanded.
- VIII. Related Cases. This section of the JS 44 is used to reference related pending cases, if any. If there are related pending cases, insert the docket numbers and the corresponding judge names for such cases.

Date and Attorney Signature. Date and sign the civil cover sheet.

Case 2:22-cv-01473-KSIMED SOCKHSIDERIC FIGURE 15/22 Page 3 of 11 FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

DESIGNATION FORM

(to be used by counsel or pro se plaintiff to indicate the category of the case for the purpose of assignment to the appropriate calendar)

Address of Plaintiff:	451 Harrison Avenue, Glenside	e, PA 19038				
radies of Familie.	*	<u>*</u>				
Address of Defendant: 185 Oakland Avenue, Suite 150, Birmingham, MI 48009						
Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction: 451 Harrison Avenue, Glenside, PA 19038						
RELATED CASE, IF ANY:						
Case Number:		Date Terminated:				
Civil cases are deemed related when Yes is answered	to any of the following questions:					
1. Is this case related to property included in an earlier numbered suit pending or within one year Yes No Ver previously terminated action in this court?						
2. Does this case involve the same issue of fact or grow out of the same transaction as a prior suit Yes No Very pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court?						
3. Does this case involve the validity or infringement of a patent already in suit or any earlier numbered case pending or within one year previously terminated action of this court?						
4. Is this case a second or successive habeas corpus, social security appeal, or pro se civil rights Yes No						
I certify that, to my knowledge, the within case this court except as noted above. DATE: O4/15/2022 Attorney-at-Law/Pro Se Plaintiff Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)						
CIVIL: (Place a √ in one category only)						
A. Federal Question Cases:	B. Diversity Jurisdiction C					
	All Other Contracts 1. Insurance Contracts 2. Airplane Persona 3. Assault, Defamat 4. Marine Personal 5. Motor Vehicle Portion of the Personal In 7. Products Liabilit 8. Products Liabilit 9. All other Diversit (Please specify)	nect and Other Contracts al Injury tion Injury tersonal Injury njury (Please specify) Ty Ty Asbestos				
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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

GREGG HENNIX and TAWANDA HENNIX,, h/w,	: :
Plaintiffs,	: CIVIL ACTION NO.:
v.	: :
DEVELOP LIGHT CROVER THE 14	:
BELFOR USA GROUP, INC., d/b/a "BELFOR USA" and JOHN DOE	; ;
PERSONS OR ENTITIES	

Defendants.

NOTICE OF REMOVAL

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1332, 1441, and 1446, defendant Belfor USA Group, Inc., d/b/a Belfor Property Restoration, erroneously pled as Belfor USA Group, Inc., d/b/a "Belfor USE" ("Belfor"), through undersigned counsel, hereby removes the above-captioned case from the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and states as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. On March 14, 2022, plaintiffs Gregg and Tawanda Hennix ("Plaintiffs") filed the complaint against defendant Belfor in the Court of Common Pleas County of Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania. The case is captioned *Gregg Hennix and Tawanda Hennix v. Belfor USA Group, Inc., d/b/a "Belfor USA", et al.*, March Term 2022, Case No. 01349. *See* Complaint, attached hereto as **Exhibit "A**."

- 2. On March 18, 2022, plaintiff purportedly served the complaint on CT Corporation Systems c/o Belfor USA Group, Inc., with plaintiffs' complaint. Plaintiffs' complaint constitutes all process, pleadings, and orders served upon defendant in this action. *Id.*, at ¶ 7.
- 3. In their complaint, plaintiffs allege personal injuries resulting from a slip and fall "from a temporary step which consisted of a cinderblock placed by either the staff or a subcontractor of [Belfor], causing Plaintiff to sustain serious and severe personal injuries and damages." Id., at ¶ 7.
- 4. The complaint asserts causes of action for negligence and loss of consortium. *Id.*, at ¶¶ 1-24.
- 5. Belfor denies any liability to the plaintiffs under any theory, and denies that any alleged act or omission of Belfor caused or contributed to plaintiffs' alleged damages.
- 6. Removal of this action is appropriate. This Court has diversity jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a) because the plaintiffs are citizens of a different state than defendant and the amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000, exclusive of interest and costs.

VENUE AND JURISDICTION

- 7. Venue is proper in this Court because this action is being removed from the state court in which plaintiffs filed their complaint, the Court of Common Pleas County of Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania, which sits within the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. 28 U.S.C. §§ 118(a), 1441(a), and 1446(a).
- 8. Federal courts have original jurisdiction over "all civil actions where the matter in controversy exceeds \$75,000, exclusive of interest and costs, and is between . . . citizens of different States" and in actions between "citizens of a State and citizens or subjects of a foreign state [...]" 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a)(1), (2).

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9. Removal from a state court to a federal court is thus proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1332 when: (1) there is complete diversity between the parties and (2) the amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000, exclusive of costs and interest.

BASIS FOR REMOVAL

I. REMOVAL IS PROPER BECAUSE THIS COURT HAS SUBJECT MATTER JURISDICTION UNDER 28 U.S.C. §§ 1332 AND 1441

A. The Parties Are Completely Diverse

- 10. Complete diversity exists because plaintiffs are Pennsylvania citizens, and defendant Belfor is a citizen of another state.
- 11. Plaintiffs allege they reside at 451 Harrison Avenue, Glenside, PA 19038, and are citizens of Pennsylvania. *See* Ex. A, at ¶ 1.
- 12. A corporation is a citizen of both the state where it is incorporated and the state where its principal place of business is located. 28 U.S.C. § 1332(c)(1).
- 13. Defendant Belfor is a Colorado corporation with its principal place of business in Michigan. *See id.*, at ¶ 2.
 - 14. Accordingly, plaintiffs are diverse from Belfor.
- 15. Plaintiffs also sue John Doe Persons or Entities whose identities are not yet known. *See id.*, at ¶ 4. However, "the citizenship of defendants sued under fictitious names shall be disregarded." 28 U.S.C. § 1441(a).

B. The Amount-in-Controversy Is Satisfied

16. A federal district court has "original jurisdiction of all civil actions where the matter in controversy exceeds the sum or value of \$ 75,000, exclusive of interests and costs." *Meltzer v. Cont'l Ins. Co.*, 163 F. Supp.2d 523, 525 (E.D. Pa. 2001) (citing 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a)(1)).

- 17. Pursuant to § 1446(a), a defendant seeking to remove a case must include in its notice of removal "a short and plain statement of the grounds for removal." The United States Supreme Court has held that to satisfy the "short and plain statement" requirement, the removal notice must allege the amount in controversy "plausibly" but "need not contain evidentiary submissions" to support the allegation. *Dart Cherokee Basin Operating Co. v. Owens*, 135 S. Ct. 547, 551, 553 (2014) (quoting *Ellenburg v. Spartan Motors Chassis Inc.*, 519 F.3d 192 (4th Cir. 2008)). The amount in controversy is determined by the complaint itself. *See Horton v. Liberty Mut. Ins. Co.*, 367 U.S. 348, 353 (1961); *Angus v. Shiley, Inc.*, 989 F.2d 142, 145 (3d Cir. 1993); *Hocker v. Kurfeld*, No. 15-04262, 2015 WL 8007463, at *2 (E.D. Pa. Dec. 7, 2015). "When a complaint does not limit its request to a precise monetary amount, the court must independently appraise the claim's value to determine if it satisfies the amount in controversy requirement." *Hocker*, 2015 WL 8007463 at *2 (citing *Angus*, 989 F.2d at 146).
- Plaintiff Gregg Hennix alleges that he "sustained serious, painful, debilitating and permanent personal injuries and damages on or about his entire body, including but not limited to, a high grade muscle rupture of the right quadriceps muscle and tendon, which required surgical repair, and cause him to endure great pain, suffering and disability." Ex. A, at ¶ 15. In addition, plaintiff claims that he "has endured in the past, and will in the future continue to endure, great pain and suffering, as well as emotional distress and anxiety." Ex. A, at ¶ 16.
- 19. In addition to the alleged physical and personal injuries, plaintiff avers that he has "incurred charges for medical and rehabilitative care and treatment in an effort to remedy and ameliorate his injuries, and he may continue to incur said charges for an indefinite time in the future." Ex. A, at ¶ 18).

- 20. The complaint further alleges that "plaintiff sustained a diminution in his ability to enjoy life and life's pleasures." Ex. A, at PRAYER FOR DAMAGES, WHEREFORE (a)(6)).
- 21. Finally, the complaint alleges that "plaintiff was unable to attend to his usual and daily vocations and avocations, and such disabilities may to some extent be permanent." Ex. A, at ¶ 19.
- 22. Based on these allegations, the amount in controversy exceeds the \$75,000 jurisdictional threshold. *See, e.g., Angus v. Shiley, Inc.*, 989 F.2d 142, 145-46 (3d Cir. 1993) (holding that district court correctly denied a motion to remand where plaintiff claimed only emotional injuries from allegedly defective medical device, noting the complaint sought "at least" \$40,000 in damages and that plaintiff claimed to have suffered anxiety and various other emotional ailments); *Hocker*, 2015 WL 8007463, at *2 (finding amount in controversy exceeded \$75,000 where the complaint alleged, as does plaintiff here, serious medical injuries and medical costs).
- 23. Courts in this District and around the country routinely hold that cases involving alleged "serious and permanent" physical injuries, like those injuries alleged here, satisfy the amount-in-controversy requirement. *See, e.g., Brent v. First Student, Inc.*, 2020 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 88551, *6–7, 2020 WL 2570355 (E.D. Pa. May 20, 2020) ("Allegations of serious and permanent physical injuries resulting in 'loss of earnings and impairment of earning capacity and medical costs' are sufficient to establish that the jurisdictional minimum is met."); *Toan Nyugen v. Titus*, 2007 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 63731, *10, 2007 WL 2461815 (E.D. Pa. Aug. 29, 2007) (holding that the amount-in-controversy requirement was satisfied because a jury, if it found liability "would not be unreasonable in awarding Plaintiff damages exceeding \$ 75,000 if it credited Plaintiff's claims of physical injury and the resulting pain and anguish that has plagued him for the last two-and-a-half years as a result of the accident"); *see also Garcia v. Owens-Brockway Glass Container Inc.*, No.

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LA CV16-01889 JAK (RAOx), 2016 WL 9275451, at *3 (C.D. Cal. June 30, 2016) (complaint seeking compensatory damages and damages for pain and suffering related to "severe injuries" is sufficient to demonstrate amount in controversy greater than \$75,000) (gathering cases).

24. Because there is complete diversity of citizenship between both plaintiffs and defendant Belfor and because the amount-in-controversy requirement is satisfied, this Court has jurisdiction over the parties' dispute.

II. ALL OTHER REMOVAL REQUIREMENTS ARE SATISFIED.

- A. This Notice of Removal Is Timely.
- 25. This Notice of Removal is timely under 28 U.S.C. § 1446(b) as it is filed within 30 days of plaintiffs' alleged service of the complaint upon defendant Belfor.

B. Notice of Removal to Plaintiffs

- 26. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1446(d), upon filing of this Notice of Removal, Belfor will furnish written notice to plaintiffs' counsel and will file a copy of this Notice with the Prothonotary of the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania.
- 27. By filing this Notice of Removal, Belfor does not waive any defenses, counterclaims or crossclaims available to it and expressly reserves all such defenses.

C. The State Court File Is Attached

28. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1446(a), Belfor attaches copies of all documents filed in state court, including all process, pleadings, and orders (other than the complaint). Only the state civil cover sheet and complaint, **Exhibit A**, have been filed to date. Defendant Belfor also attaches a copy of the docket as of April 15, 2022 as **Exhibit "B**."

WHEREFORE, defendant Belfor respectfully removes this action from the Court of Common Pleas County of Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 118(b), 1332, 1441, and 1446.

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Dated: April 15, 2022 GREENBERG TRAURIG LLP

/s/ Joel Max Eads

Joel Max Eads, Esq.
George J. Farrell, Esq.
1717 Arch Street, Suite 400
Philadelphia, PA 19103
T: 215.988.7800
F: 215.988.7801
eadsj@gtlaw.com
farrellg@gtlaw.com

Attorneys for defendant Belfor USA Group, Inc., d/b/a Belfor Property Restoration

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on April 15, 2022, I caused a true and correct copy of the foregoing **NOTICE OF REMOVAL**, to be served *via* the Court's CM/ECF system, and electronic mail, upon all counsel of record:

Andrew L. Miller, Esquire Andrew L. Miller & Associates, P.C. 15 St. Asaph's Road Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004 amiller@amillerlaw.com

Attorney for Plaintiffs Gregg Hennix and Tawanda Hennix

/s/ Joel Max Eads

Joel Max Eads, Esq